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For more information and to give feedback


King County Metro's Accessible Services:

- Phone: (206) 689-3113
- TTY: (206) 689-3116
- E-mail: accessible.services@metrokc.gov
- Web site: <http://transit.metrokc.gov/accessible/access.html>
- Fax: (206) 263-3101
- Mail: King County Metro Accessible Services
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All Accessible Services printed materials (including this newsletter) are available in braille, on audio tape cassette, in large print and on computer diskette. Call (206) 689-3113 (voice) or (206) 689-3116 (TTY).

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Report on Metro's Accessible Services Program

Is a vanpool
for you?
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Summer 2002

Report from the Accessible Services Advisory Committee

by Leo Finnegan, Chair
Mark Adreon, Vice Chair

King County's Accessible Services Advisory Committee (ASAC) has launched a significant planning effort with community groups, government agencies and transportation providers to improve specialized transportation for seniors and people with disabilities

This spring the committee convened two summits of leaders from community-based organizations and government agencies that work with the disability and senior communities, and representatives from various transportation provider groups. The purpose of the summits was to identify the gaps that exist in current transportation resources, problems with how services are being delivered, and possible solutions.

Next steps

After prioritizing key areas, the advisory committee will appoint task forces to study them during the fall, returning their recommendations to the committee by November. The committee will then draw up official recommendations to be forwarded to the King County Executive and the King County Council in the first quarter of 2003.

"We want to get this on the table and get the community working with the county to find creative, effective solutions," said Leo Finnegan, ASAC chair. "We want to solve such problems as not enough service in rural areas, lack of flexibility in existing transportation programs, and the importance of transportation for people to have a good quality of life."

Updates of the committee's work with the task force and recommendations for specialized transportation will appear in future newsletters. Reports from the summits are available on the committee's Web site at <http://www.metrokc.gov/kcdot/whatshap/accessib.htm>. If you have further questions or wish to receive a copy by mail, please contact Pat Cleary, ASAC staff, at 206-684-1142 (voice) or 206-684-1682 (TTY) or pat.cleary@metrokc.gov.



Come to a meeting in your area

Metro Transit will hold meetings in August to discuss your questions about recent changes and events in ACCESS Transportation services.

To request a sign language interpreter or meeting materials in large print or braille, call (206) 689-3113 (voice) or (206) 689-3116 (TTY) at least two weeks before the meeting.

Thursday, August 8, 2002
6:30-8:30 p.m.

Redmond Senior Center
8703 160th NE, Redmond
(Take Metro routes 230, 251 or 253)

Friday, August 9, 2002
1-3 p.m.

Kent Regional Library
212 2nd Ave. N., Kent
(Take Metro routes 150, 164, 168, 169, 183, 914)

Saturday, August 10, 2002
9:30-11:30 a.m.

King Street Center,
201 S. Jackson, Seattle
(Take almost any downtown Metro bus route.)

Re-certification

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request ACCESS demand trips often, you will hear from Accessible Services earlier in the process. It's anticipated that it will take slightly more than two years to reach all 8,000 people. Each person will receive a re-certification packet with an individually addressed letter that will include, **in bold**, the date that each person's eligibility to use ACCESS Transportation will end.

If you get a request to re-certify your eligibility for ADA paratransit van service, please complete the application and mail it back at your earliest convenience. If you prefer not to wait, call (206) 263-3113 (voice) or (206) 263-3116 (TTY) and request that a re-certification packet be mailed to you.

Joining a Metro vanpool

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average cost for a vanpool rider is about \$70 per month. If you are interested in joining an existing vanpool, or creating one of your own, please call Metro Rideshare Services at (206) 625-4500.

A Monthly Metro ACCESS Pass costs \$13.50 and is available for purchase by calling Metro's Pass Sales office, (206) 624-PASS, for mail-order service, or through Metro Online Pass Sales at <http://transit.metrokc.gov/>. A Metro ACCESS Pass is valid for the full cost of the fare on ACCESS Transportation and Metro buses, and covers up to \$200 a month on a Metro vanpool.





South King County Activity Center employees working at the Mariners game were the first to experience Metro’s new Special Use Vanpool Program.

Finding new ways to get to work

On the day the Seattle Mariners threw out the first pitch at Safeco Field this year, 12 stadium employees experienced another “first” – traveling to work using Metro’s new Special Use VanPool Program instead of *ACCESS* Transportation.

The employees work for South King County Activity Center (SKCAC), which provides employment opportunities for people with disabilities living in South King County. SKCAC Industries was the first agency to participate in the Special Use Vanpool Program, developed through a partnership between Metro’s Accessible Services’ Community Partnership Program and Metro’s Rideshare Services.

The program was born after SKCAC Associate Director Debbie Meyer called the Community Partnership Program for help in solving a dilemma. SKCAC Industries had signed a contract with Safeco Field’s maintenance provider, but it was contingent upon finding a flexible method of transportation – one that would pick up

12 employees from SKCAC offices in Kent for 12-15 games per month and return them to their own homes after each game.

Meyer, who had worked with the Community Partnership Program in the

past, was surprised at how easy it was to set up and use the Special Use VanPool Program, which she describes as “great” and “a real plus” for her agency.

The program is available to agencies able to provide at least 50 one-way trips per month for *ACCESS*-eligible customers. Participants receive a van, maintenance, gas, and comprehensive and collision insurance free of charge, plus 400 free miles each month for business use. The agency supplies liability insurance and drivers.

Agencies also benefit because they can set their own schedules, design their own routes and provide a consistent travel environment for their customers – for example, they can offer the same drivers and ridesharing partners for every ride, and riders can even sit in the same seats on the van if they choose.

Agencies interested in the program and able to provide at least 50 one-way trips each month for *ACCESS*-eligible customers should contact Don Okazaki, Program Manager for the Community Partnership Program, at (206) 263-3453.

Joining a Metro vanpool just got easier

Starting July 1, *ACCESS* customers who travel to work in a Metro vanpool will be able to use their monthly *ACCESS* pass to pay for all or part of their monthly vanpool fare. Although many *ACCESS* customers use *ACCESS* Transportation to get to work, some share their ride in a Metro vanpool that is lift-equipped and accessible to people with disabilities.

Metro vanpools consist of 5-15 commuters who ride from their homes or a nearby park-and-ride lot to their work site.

Each vanpool needs a volunteer driver, back-up driver and bookkeeper. The van, gas and insurance are provided by Metro. The vanpool driver, who must have a very good driving record, takes the car home each day and may request personal use of the van. The first 40 miles are free, and eligible drivers can purchase additional use at 32 cents per mile.

The cost of a rider’s monthly vanpool fare depends on the distance traveled to work each day and the number of vanpool participants. The current

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Frequent no-shows hurt the *ACCESS* system

Did you know that more than one-fifth of the trips scheduled on *ACCESS* are never used? Unfortunately, many of these cancellations occur too late, after the vans have been scheduled. These are trips that could have been given to other riders.

To improve service delivery, *ACCESS* Transportation is implementing a policy that will hold riders accountable for trips that they schedule, but do not cancel early enough to schedule another ride. A no-show will be recorded in your *ACCESS* trips history under any of the following conditions:

- You cancel later than 5 p.m. the day before your trip.
- You are not at the address where you requested a pickup.
- You are not ready to depart within five minutes of the *ACCESS* van’s arrival when the vehicle has arrived within the 30-minute pickup window.

After three no-shows in a calendar month, riders will receive a warning letter listing the trips involved. Riders who accumulate six no-shows in that month may be suspended for seven days. Prior suspensions will be considered in deciding how long the next suspension period will be; the maximum is six months.

So remember, please cancel your trips as far in advance as possible – earlier than 5 p.m. the day before – if you are unable to use service you have scheduled.

Accessible Services still re-certifying riders

Accessible Services has completed re-certification of riders who are eligible for hand-to-hand rides; that is, people who because of their disability, can’t be left alone.

Re-certification of riders who have subscription trips will be completed before the end of June. The process has been intensive both for people being re-certified and for staff. As a result, Accessible Services will not begin re-certification of demand riders – people who schedule their rides one at a time – until September.

About 8,000 people request demand rides. Accessible Services will ask all riders to re-certify in the order of their frequency of trip requests. So, if you

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Advisory Committee seeks new members

Are you a senior, a person with disabilities or an advocate for seniors or people with disabilities? Are you interested in advising the King County Department of Transportation on ways to improve transportation services for senior riders or those riders with disabilities? If so, the Accessible Services Advisory Committee needs you.

The committee is looking for new members. For an information and application packet, call Pat Cleary, ASAC staff, at (206) 684-1142 (voice) or (206) 684-1682 (TTY), or via e-mail at pat.cleary@metrokc.gov. The application deadline is Aug. 16, 2002.

Save on your utility bills

You could be eligible for a 50 percent reduction on your Seattle City Light and Combined Utility (water-wastewater-solid waste) bills through the city’s Utility Discount Program.

Applicants must meet the following criteria:

1. Have Seattle City Light electric bill in applicant’s name
2. Be age 65 or older **or**
3. Under age 65 and disabled (disabled applicants must be receiving disability payments, or be legally blind, or on life-support equipment)
4. Not living in subsidized housing (SHA, HUD, KCHA, Section 8, Shelter+Care etc., except for SHA “BOND” housing)
5. Not exceed the current gross household-income limit of \$23,024/year (\$1,919/month) for a one-person household or \$30,108/year (\$2,509/month) for a two-person household. (The maximum income limit increases with the number of household members and the income limits change each January)

For information on how to apply, call (206) 684-0500 or stop by the Seattle Mayor’s Office for Senior Citizens, Human Services Department, 618-2nd Ave. Suite 250 (2nd and Cherry), Seattle, WA 98104. Our TDD number is (206) 233-2778. Information and applications are also available on the Web: www.cityofseattle.net/humanservices/mosc